

**AIR FORCE MEDIA CONTEST
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
JANUARY 1, 2004 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2004**

The Air Force Media Contest is sponsored annually by the Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs and is conducted by the Air Force News Service at Headquarters Air Force News Agency, San Antonio, Texas. The 2004 contest is the 48th such competition. Awards are presented to *units* and *individuals* for outstanding achievements in furthering the objectives of the Air Force internal information program.

A list of target dates is provided as Attachment 1.

I. Eligibility

A. Military units, personnel and civilian employees of radio and television stations, magazines and Air Force newspapers published under Department of Defense Instruction 5120.4 and Air Force Instruction 35-101 are eligible to submit entries through their respective major commands, field operating agencies and direct reporting units. This includes the National Guard and Reserve. Contract writers and photographers employed by civilian enterprise publishers, as well as stringers with no formal affiliation to the newspaper, may enter Print Media categories M and N.

B. Personnel assigned to the *Stars and Stripes* newspapers are not eligible to participate.

C. MAJCOM and service headquarters personnel may compete only in the Air Force Print or Broadcast Journalist of the Year categories. Broadcasters may also enter in not more than four other categories.

D. Staff members of Unified Command publications (except *Stars and Stripes*) may enter print categories E through L, R and S. The command may enter its publication in category A, B, C, D or Q through the Service funding the command.

E. Entries for 2004 must have been produced between January 1 and December 31, 2004.

F. The following products may not be entered in the program: civilian enterprise guides and directories; yearbooks; publications and productions funded by non-appropriated funds; educational and training films; and commercially produced, contracted and mixed productions (for example, those produced part in-house and part by contractors).

G. MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs must ensure that entries meet eligibility criteria, DoD and Air Force directives and regulations. AFNEWS will make final determinations, if necessary.

II. Entries

A. Entries must be authorized products prepared for internal information purposes and produced, published or broadcast during the current program year.

B. All entries must contribute to Air Force internal information objectives and meet the highest standards of production, execution, and professional excellence. Products should convey information that helps DoD personnel and families succeed in their jobs and missions.

C. MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs may submit only one entry per category.

D. No single product may be entered in more than one category, except when entered in an individual category and as part of a submission for the Print or Broadcast Journalist of the Year, Outstanding New Writer, Outstanding New Broadcaster or Command Information Campaign categories.

E. Broadcast Media categories:

1. Services have discretion on eligibility for their own competitions but generally will be limited to units, service members, civilian employees and contractors assigned, employed or associated with that service. If services do allow cross-service entry they shall coordinate judging to insure that the same personnel do not compete in multiple competitions or the same media is not used for multiple competitions.

2. Only one example of the product specified is required for all categories except M, N and O. Use a separate tape or other form of media for each category entered.

F. Print Media categories:

1. Entries to categories A through D and O must include both electronic (in pdf format) and hard-copy versions of the complete publication. Entries to categories E through N, P, R, and S must include electronic versions on a disk or compact disc in text (txt) format for stories or jpeg format for photographs, and pdf files of the page on which they were published.

2. Electronic versions must be identical to hard-copy products, with no further editing or embellishments applied after initial publication.

G. Each entry must be accompanied by a completed Air Force Media Contest official entry form (embedded in section V). Entries without an official entry form will not be judged.

H. Entries will not be returned. All winning entries and judges' remarks will be kept by the Defense Information School (DINFOS) for educational use.

III. Categories and Entry Specifications

Print Media Categories

Category A: Metro Format Newspaper

Category B: Tabloid Format Newspaper

Category C: Magazine Format Publication

Category D: Newsletter Format Publication

Specifications for categories A, B, C, and D:

1. Enter two issues. Submit six copies of each issue. One issue must be the issue dated March 12, 2004. If no issue was published on that date, enter the issue published immediately prior to March 12. The second issue may be any edition published during the program year. Electronic versions should be entered as pdf files on floppy or CD.

2. These categories must be entered as a unit entry.

3. Judges will not consider non-editorial differences in products, such as full color printing, paper stock weight, etc.

4. Submit six hard copies and a pdf copy of each issue.

Category E: News Article.

Category F: Feature Article.

Category G: Commentary.

Category H: Sports Article.

Specifications for categories E, F, G, and H:

1. Entries in these categories must be the work of an individual.

2. Submit a certificate of authenticity from the responsible Public Affairs Officer for entries that were published without a byline.

3. Enter one example per category.

4. Submit an electronic copy in txt format and a PDF copy of the page on which the entry appeared.

Category I: Series.

Specifications for category I:

1. Entry must include two or more feature articles dealing with a common theme. The articles must have been clearly identified in the original publication as parts of a series that appeared sequentially in two or more issues of the publication.
2. Entry must follow the same specifications as entries to categories E, F, G, and H above, except that units may submit entries to which more than one individual contributed.
3. Submit electronic copies of the stories in txt format and PDF copies of the pages on which the stories appeared.

Category J: Stand-Alone Photograph. Entry must be published, stand-alone photograph, with caption.

Category K: Photojournalism. Entry must include two or more photographs, captions, and story by the same photojournalist. All elements will be judged. No elements may be entered in any other category.

Specifications for categories J and K:

1. Entries in these categories must be the work of an individual.
2. Enter one example per category.
3. For category J, submit an electronic copy in jpg format and a PDF copy of the page on which it appeared. For Category K, submit a PDF copy of the page on which it appeared.

Category L: Art/Graphics in Support of a Publication. Art may be computer-generated or produced through traditional means, including drawing, painting, or air brushed art that supports a story or a theme (includes cartoon art). The supported story must be submitted, but will not be judged. Entries from non-public affairs personnel may be entered in this category.

Specifications for Category L:

1. Entry in this category must be the work of an individual.
2. Submit an electronic copy in jpg format and a PDF copy of the page on which it appeared.

Category M: Contribution by Contractor/Stringer (Writer). This award recognizes the single outstanding contribution in writing (as defined in categories E through I) by an individual contract writer or stringer for a military publication.

Category N: Contribution by Contractor/Stringer (Photographer). This award recognizes the single outstanding contribution in photography (as defined in categories J and K) by an individual contract photographer or stringer for a military publication.

Category O: Deployed Publication.

1. Enter two issues. Submit six copies of each issue. One issue must be the issue dated March 12, 2004. If no issue was published on that date, enter the issue published immediately prior to March 12. The second issue may be any edition published during the program year.

2. This category must be entered as a unit entry.

3. Judges will not consider non-editorial differences in products, such as full color printing, paper stock weight, etc.

4. Submit six hard copies and a pdf copy of each issue.

Category P: Not used.

Category Q: Web-based Publication. An Internet or an intranet publication, hosted on the military Internet domain (.mil), that presents news and information to an internal audience.

Specifications for Category Q:

1. Content and design must be produced primarily by public affairs personnel.

2. The publications must conform to DoD and Air Force internal information, security review and web instructions and regulations.

3. The publication must have been in existence for a minimum of three months during the program year, and must be updated on a regular schedule (for example, daily, weekly, etc.).

4. The publication will be judged as it exists on the date the judging takes place.

5. Only units may enter this category.

6. Units must provide the publication URL and any necessary logon information.

Category R: Outstanding New Writer. This award recognizes uniformed personnel working in the print journalism community for less than two years as certified by the submitting MAJCOM, FOA or DRU. Judging specifications will be the same as for category S.

Category S: Air Force Print Journalist of the Year. This award recognizes the journalist who exemplifies the highest standards of military print journalism as shown by writing across a spectrum of categories.

Specifications for Categories R and S:

1. MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs may nominate one candidate per category.
2. Only individuals may be entered in these categories.
3. A letter of nomination must accompany each entry. Nominations must include a one-page biographical sketch of the individual.
4. Entries must five writing examples by the same individual. Entries must include at least one example from three of the five individual writing categories (E, F, G, H, and I). For example, two sports articles, two news articles and a commentary.
5. Submit a certificate of authenticity from the responsible PAO for articles that were published without a byline.
6. Submit electronic copies of all stories in txt format and pdf copies of the pages on which they appeared.

V. Required Documentation.

Note the instructions on the bottom of the form before you begin entering information.



04 Media Contest
Print Entry Form.doc

****Once you open the entry form, you should select *File, Save Copy As*, and choose a location to save the form separate from this SOP. Then open the copy.**

- A. One entry form must be filled out for each entry. Submit an electronic copy as a Word document and a printed copy of each form.
- B. All information for an entry must be contained on a single form. Ensure the form does not extend past one page.
- C. All blanks on the entry form must be filled in. "N/A" is not an acceptable entry.
- D. Type of award: Individual awards are for products created by a single person. Unit awards are for products created by more than one person.
- E. Location: The unit, base and state.
- F. Use full names (**no nicknames**) as you wish them to appear on award plaques and certificates. **Unit names must be spelled out -- no abbreviations.** For unit awards, the unit, or duty section, or publication name, etc., must be entered as it should appear on an award.

G. Electronic copies should have the “//signed//” designator and a name listed for “Supervisor’s signature and printed rank and name.”

REMINDER

If an entry is a Unit submission, that unit name is what goes in the “Plaque should go to” block on the entry form. Individuals who played a role in the production of the product are listed on the entry form in the “Contributors” block.

If an entry is an Individual submission, that individual is listed in the “Plaque should go to” block on the entry form. No other contributors are allowed and the “Contributors” block is left empty.

VI. Judging

A. MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs will judge their own entries and select the best entry in each category for submission to the Air Force program.

B. Entries for the Air Force Media Contest must be **received by Feb. 11, 2005**, and forwarded to:

HQ AFNEWS/NSOP
Attn: Media Contest
203 Norton Street
San Antonio TX 78226-1848.

C. AFNEWS will select at least three print and three broadcast judges for the Air Force Media Contest. Selection criteria for judges will be based on their professional experience in the communications field.

D. Entries will be judged on professional excellence, originality and support of internal information themes and objectives.

E. Broadcast judges will adhere to the following standards and criteria:

1. Judges will select winning entries based on professional excellence, originality, and support of internal information themes and objectives.

2. Judges will use five criteria to select winning entries in all categories, except the Command Information Campaign, Outstanding New Broadcaster and Broadcast Journalist of the Year categories, which have a sixth criterion:

(a) Internal Information/Value to Viewer: Does the information apply to the audience? Is the message important for the audience to hear?

- (b) Script/Message Effectiveness: Is it well written? Is the message clear?
- (c) Technical Quality: Are the video, audio, levels, lighting and editing well done?
- (d) Voice/Diction/Camera Presence: How well do the announcers or newscasters interpret the script and clearly enunciate? How well do the announcers present themselves?
- (e) Creativity: Is the presentation original? How effectively do the various elements work together?
- (f) Diversity (categories M, N and O): Does the nominated individual have the ability to perform well in all aspects of broadcasting, such as writing, editing, announcing, producing, and directing? Does Command Information Campaign submission include a variety of products for the campaign?

F. Print judges will use several criteria to select winning entries in the print categories:

- (a) Categories A, B, C, D and O
 - 1. Content
 - 2. Professional excellence
 - 3. Supports internal information objectives
 - 4. Design
 - 5. Overall value to reader
- (b) Categories E, F, G, H, I, M, R and S
 - 1. Lead
 - 2. Transitions
 - 3. Body
 - 4. Conclusion
 - 5. Mechanics (grammar, etc.)
 - 6. Overall value to reader
- (c) Categories J, K, and N
 - 1. Composition
 - 2. Impact
 - 3. Story telling
 - 4. Caption/outline
- (d) Category L
 - 1. Composition/Design
 - 2. Impact
 - 3. Story telling

4. Caption/outline

VII. Awards

- A. Awards may be made in 18 print and 16 broadcast categories.
- B. No award will be made in a category if the judges deem that no entry meets program standards.
- C. There are two types of awards: individual and unit.
- D. Individual first-place winners will receive plaques and letters of commendation from SAF/PA. The winner of the Air Force Print Journalist of the Year category will receive the Eagle of Excellence statuette in lieu of a plaque. The Eagle of Excellence statuette will be presented at an appropriate ceremony as determined by SAF/PA.
- E. Unit awards are used to recognize a production effort involving more than one contributor.
- F. A plaque will be awarded to a unit that wins a category. Letters of commendation and Certificates of Achievement will be awarded to the individual contributors.
- G. The number of individuals who may be listed as contributors to a unit entry is limited to eight. MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs should ensure the submission is limited to those who significantly contributed to the product being entered. List these names under the "Contributors" block on the entry form.
- H. If the judges deem that more than one entry meets the highest standards of production, execution and professional excellence, they may award more than one first-place award in that category.
- I. Second- and third-place finishers will receive Certificates of Achievement.
- K. Air Force Recognition Ribbon: First-place winners in each individual category of the Air Force Media Contest are eligible to wear the Air Force Recognition Ribbon, in accordance with Air Force Instructions 36-2803 and 36-2805. Units/duty sections or members of services other than the Air Force are not eligible to receive the ribbon. Only one award of the Recognition Ribbon is allowed per individual per contest year.

VIII. After Action

- A. SAF/PA will provide a list of the winners to the field.
- B. AFNEWS will:
 - 1. Prepare all letters, certificates and plaques and forward them to the MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs for awarding.

2. Provide judges' comments and summary remarks to MAJCOM, FOA and DRU points of contact for their use and dissemination.

**Target Dates: 2004 Thomas Jefferson Awards
Program Year (Jan 1-Dec 31, 2004)**

2004

Dec 31	Program year ends.
--------	--------------------

2005

Feb 11	Deadline for submission of entries to AFNEWS
Mar 5-11	Entries judged
Mar 11	SAF/PA announces winners
Apr 5	Deadline for submission of entries to Thomas Jefferson Awards Program.
Apr 15	Judges' comments sent to MAJCOMs, FOAs and DRUs
Apr 18-22	Thomas Jefferson entries judged
May 2	OASD(PA) announces winners (with the exception of the PJOY & BJOY)
May 20	Awards ceremony/Awards provided to Services
June 17	2006 SOP Meeting with Services